

A periodical record of entomological investigation published at the Department of Entomology, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Volume 7

Number 3

23 July 1971

CONTENTS

Guest Editorial — Excellence has no Nationality	287
Sehgal — A Taxonomic Survey of the Agromyzidae (Diptera) of Alberta, Canada, with Observations on Host-Plant Relationships	291
Nimmo — Corrigenda on the Adult Rhyacophilidae and Limnephilidae (Trichoptera) of Alberta and Eastern British Columbia and their Post-Glacial Origin	406
Thomas — An Apparatus and Method for the Field Separation of Tabanid Larvae (Diptera: Tabanidae) from Moss	407
Announcement.	409

Guest Editorial

A committee has been established in the Province of Alberta to enquire into non-Canadian influence in post-secondary education in the province. There is a non-Canadian component in this university and especially in the distribution list of Quaestiones entomologicae. To these people among others both the existence of this committee and the following statement of the president of the university will be of interest:

Excellence has no Nationality

Let me begin by making it clear to members of the Committee that I appear before you as one person, not as a representative of The University of Alberta. Although I am aware that other people and other groups from The University of Alberta will present ideas to you, no consensus of opinion has been sought, and there will be no opinion given by anyone or any group which might be interpreted as the official opinion of The University of Alberta.

It is also important for me to say that I am aware of the unemployment situation in Canada, and that the possibility of high unemployment at all levels is of major concern to me. The University of Alberta employs several thousands of people, both with and without university degrees. It therefore goes without saying that our University must adopt employment procedures which will help to alleviate the high incidence of unemployment among Canadian citizens, and among those to whom our government has granted the right to live and work in Canada.

However, the purpose of your inquiry is not economic in nature, and I mention employment procedures for the sole purpose of saying that universities are aware that their situation in the 1970's will be far different from what it was in the 1960's.

The question of "who should teach at The University of Alberta" is not new. Let me quote from the minutes of a meeting of a governing body of this University:

"Dr. Jenkins expressed his disapproval of the idea of appointing all the professors and assistants outside of the province. He was strongly in favor of utilizing the material available in the province and he felt sure that many men now engaged in educational work were eminently qualified to undertake the higher branches of learning and he felt an injustice would be done the whole of the teaching profession of the province if only outsiders were appointed."

The sentiment was expressed at the first meeting of the Senate of The University of Alberta on March 30, 1908. This was before a single member of the staff, other than the President, had been appointed to The University of Alberta. Fortunately the matter was not taken further. I say "fortunately" because I feel strongly that this University would not enjoy the respect it has today if Dr. Jenkins had had his way sixty-three years ago.

Since you are a Committee of Inquiry into non-Canadian Influence in Alberta Post-Secondary Education, sooner or later you will have to define what will be meant by a "non-Canadian influence," and to propose the procedures by means of which such an influence can be measured. Presumably you will have to be able to identify a good "non-Canadian influence" from one that, by some means or other, will be deemed to be bad. Your task will not be easy because in a rather restricted sense one might say that there is no real Canadian content in the science and mathematics courses taught in Canada today. Let me explain what I mean.

Education generally, and higher education particularly, is a world of ideas. If one traces the sources of the big ideas of science and mathematics, they will not be found to be Canadian, nor, in fact, were they discovered in the United States. Up until the middle of the present century, these ideas came from Great Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and even smaller countries like Denmark made major contributions to the world of ideas. During the first fifty years of the present century, it was common practice for the men and women of Canada and the United States to go abroad for post-graduate education. Indeed, these people coupled with the thousands of people who were brought to this continent from abroad developed the educational systems of Canada and the United States.

Who were the people who dominated the world of scientific ideas during the first half of the twentieth century? As illustration only, there was Einstein of Germany, Fermi of Italy, Weyl of Switzerland, Dirac of England, Bohr of Denmark, Wigner and Von Neumann of Hungary, and De Broglie of France. Even if the list were complete, no Canadian and few Americans would be contained among those who contributed to the world of big ideas up till 1950. Since that time the United States and Russia have come to the fore. The ideas that led to the development of computer technology, to the exciting ideas being developed in genetics and the life sciences, to laser technology, and to transportation and communications technologies, to name but a few, should make us aware that the time has not yet come when Canadians can arrogantly say that we shall lock out the world of ideas that exists beyond our borders, and go the rest of the way by ourselves.

How does one classify the study of arithmetic, dependent as it is on the Arabic number system? Is this a non-Canadian influence? How does one classify the study of geometry, dependent as it is on the ideas of Euclid and Pythagoras? Is this a non-Canadian influence? I do not envy you the task that has been placed into your hands, and do not know how you will accomplish it.

It is my fear however that groups are raising the "non-Canadian influence" issue on a meaningless statistical basis, and that conclusions will be drawn, and, indeed, have already been drawn, which are not warranted by the statistics. If these issues develop into a witch-hunt in Canada, then I want no part of it. I lived through the McCarthy era, and friends of mine were made uncomfortable and unwelcome at their universities. Some were dismissed and some went to jail, not because they were Communists, but because they chose to fight for academic freedom, the right to seek truth as they saw fit and the right to teach and publish the truth as they saw it.

During the 1960's, Canada sought and brought men and women from the four corners of the world to help us solve what then seemed to be an insoluble problem: the problem of expanding enrolments with too few people qualified to teach. If, after making a major con-

tribution to our country, such men and women are made to feel uncomfortable and unwelcome, then this will indeed be a sorry way to show our gratitude.

There is no reason to believe that the search for truth will ever end at the borders of Canada. We are a young country and a small nation. There is every reason to believe that the majority of the big ideas of science, by means of which scientific knowledge is acquired, will come from outside our borders for many years to come. But Canada must pursue excellence, and it must pursue excellence wherever excellence exists. Therefore, Canadians must continue to go outside of our country for study, and leaders of excellence must be brought to Canada to teach their ideas on Canadian soil.

Although I have nothing but respect and admiration for the accomplishments of Canadian universities during recent years, we have no Harvards nor Oxfords in our midst. Banting and Best shared the Nobel Prize for their discovery of insulin about half a century ago. No other Nobel Prize in science has been awarded to a Canadian nor have we been able to attract such people to work in and for Canada.

As I said at the beginning, concern over unemployment in Canada is genuine, and universities must help our people to find interesting and rewarding work. However, we must not adopt a policy which will give a short-term gain but will turn into a long-time evil. It will be a tragedy if ever Canada posts signs, or enacts legislation, which will tell the members of the world of ideas they are not welcome here. Excellence attracts excellence, and such a policy will discourage desirable people from coming to Canada, and may, in the long run, encourage desirable Canadians to leave Canada.

Max Wyman
University of Alberta

